

REPORT NO.

COUNTRY ☒ Venezuela

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SUPPLEMENT TO  
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1. The following demands, presented to President Romulo Gallegos by the Army, and the former's refusal to comply, formed the basis for the events and military coup which ensued:

- a. A national policy instead of the Accion Democratica Party policy;
- b. Military or military-sponsored Ministers of Interior, National Defense, and Communications;
- c. Military or military-sponsored Governors of at least ten states, as well as Governor of the Federal District;
- d. A stronger policy toward labor unions;
- e. Expulsion of Romulo Betancourt, President of the Accion Democratica Party;
- f. Dissolution of the Accion Democratica Party;
- g. All arms and ammunition of Accion Democratica to be delivered to the Army immediately; and
- h. No more Spanish Republicans, many of whom are suspected of being Communist agents, to be allowed to enter Venezuela.

2. With respect to the last point, Andres Eloy Blanco, Foreign Minister under Gallegos, and Romulo Betancourt are accused of being responsible for the ease with which the Spanish Republicans have been obtaining false documentation, transportation, and other assistance for their entry into Venezuela.

3. On 24 November word was received from Maracaibo that the FETRA-ZULIA (Workers' Federation of Zulia?) had called a general strike at 1:00 p.m. They exhorted, via radio, all labor to join in a manifestation in support of President Gallegos and against the Army. Commerce was paralyzed and all shops and stores were closed and barred. The Army, however, had the city under control, and armed soldiers were stationed at principal points throughout the city. There was no imminent threat of mass action against the Army and the majority of workers did not appear to be armed with more

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than machetes. The Army received six troop transports with a capacity of approximately 50 men each from the Navy to be used to transport Army troops across Lake Maracaibo in the event of violence.

4. Creole Oil Company officials at Cabimas reported general strikes with the exception of utility workers, but no threats of mass meetings. The workers displayed few arms. From Lagunillas, Creole reported the same situation except that the workers were armed with machetes and pistols. However, there were no threats of violence against the oil companies. The National Guard withdrew its troops, but replaced them with mobile patrols in strategic oil company areas. The oil companies requested reinforcements for guard duty and were promised assistance.
5. At 5:00 p.m. on 24 November a high military official in the Ministry of National Defense in Caracas stated that he was in command of the military and police forces and that a government of combined military, civilian, and independents would be formed. All military garrisons were reported to be supporting this movement. According to this official, the new government will be middle-of-the-road, and all foreign investments will be protected and respected. The executive body of the military Junta will consist of: Carlos Delgado Chalbaud, Minister of National Defense, who will be President of the Junta, Lt. Colonel Marcos Perez Jimenez, and his Assistant, Luis Felipe Ilovera Paez. The 1936 Constitution, as amended on 5 May 1945, will be observed. During the night a strict curfew was maintained, and soldiers and police were well-armed and stationed in strategic points throughout the city.
6. On the morning of 25 November a Venezuelan Army officer briefly summarized the situation as follows:
  - a. In Cumana there was some shooting and probable bloodshed.
  - b. In Porlamar (sic) there were 400 armed Accion Democratica followers and only 14 National Guardsmen to control them.
  - c. In the State of Guarico Accion Democratica supporters led armed farm laborers into two towns. In one of these towns the Accion Democratica leader voluntarily gave himself up to the Army, and the concentration of workers in both towns was broken up. There were numerous arrests made in this state, including some disaffected Army officers.
  - d. The National radio station at Maracay was sabotaged on 23 November.
  - e. The Army was concerned about towns in the interior which are removed from Army posts.
  - f. Trouble was expected from Accion Democratica supporters and Communists who were believed to be preparing an attack on the Army. All suspected homes were to be searched by the Army for arms.
7. At 9:25 p.m. on 25 November reports indicated that rifle shots were heard in the vicinity of the American Embassy in downtown Caracas. Machine-gun fire was reported in the Altamira, Los Chorros, Catia and La Pastora sections of Caracas. The city of Encontrados in the State of Zulia was reported to be in the hands of Accion Democratica. A radio station reported attempted sabotage of an electrical plant in El Tigre in the State of Anzoategui. Twenty armed students were barricaded in the University City section of Caracas. The Army had this group surrounded, but did not wish to take them with bloodshed.
8. Romulo Betancourt was reported to have taken refuge in the Panamanian Embassy. Luis Lander, President of the Chamber of Deputies, and Valmore Rodriguez, President of the Senate, are in Army custody. President Romulo Gallegos is confined in the Military School and is under the care of a physician.

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